

# The *New* Negotiator

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EDUCATION LABOUR  
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## ELRC 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING GALA EVENT

By Bernice Loxton



The ELRC formally celebrated 20 years of existence at its Annual General Meeting gala event in Cape Town.

This was an auspicious occasion that reflected on our 20 years of existence and honoured the leaders of Council who erected the foundations of the organisation and contributed to its success over the years.

Prominent speakers at this year's event included Ms V Carelse, from the Office of the Director-General, who delivered a message of support on behalf of the Department of Basic Education and highlighted the performance of Council over the

past 20 years, at both national and provincial level. She added that the Council's credibility is known throughout the public education sector.

Ms Carelse said that while celebrating the achievements of the ELRC, we have to recognise that there are times when targets are not reached as planned, such as the number of Collective Agreements concluded from 2010 to 2013. This drop in the performance of the Council is a cause for concern and all parties to the ELRC have to make an effort to do introspection and strive to uplift the standard of collaboration.

She stated the fact that not all demands from the side of the Employer and teacher unions can always be met, but that Parties had to interrogate the issues on the agenda of Council with a view of reaching consensus on them.

She reiterated that Parties have to strive for a win-win approach through continuous engagement and should explore other deadlock breaking mechanisms such as an informal forum of principals to discuss issues, without prejudice. This she said could go a long way to resolving deadlocks, which frequently engulf negotiations.



Ms V Carelse, Office of the Director-General, DBE

The leaders of parties to Council who delivered messages of support were Mr. M Maluleke, General Secretary of SADTU and Mr. H Hendricks, General Secretary of NAPTOSA.



Mr M Maluleke, SADTU General Secretary

SADTU's General Secretary, Mr. M Maluleke delivered a message on behalf of the party to Council. He reflected on our 20-year celebration of democracy and the important role that the Council played in this transformation process.

Mr. Maluleke said that prior to the dawn of democracy in the early 1990s, the majority of teachers had few organisational rights if any, and the education sector was divided along ethnic lines and demographics. The ELRC played a major role in overcoming these historic divisions and in helping to forge greater unity amongst educators.

He said that in celebrating the Council's remarkable contribution to education, we also need to look back and make an honest assessment of whether in the recent past the ELRC has been able to live up to its primary

mandate. The party's assessment indicates that in the recent past, the ELRC's performance on collective bargaining as one of its deliverables was below par. He however emphasised that the blame could not squarely be placed on the Council and that the discussion on who carries full responsibility for the ELRC's delivery on its mandate was best suited for another occasion.

Mr. Maluleke called upon all parties to redouble their efforts to ensure that the Council delivers its services to its target audience, by improving the working conditions of teachers and education personnel. He made a commitment on behalf of the SADTU, to support the Council and work with all the Parties to protect the future of our children.



Mr H Hendricks, NAPTOSA General Secretary

The Honourable Ms N Gina, Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education also delivered a message of support.



Honourable Ms N Gina, Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education

The guest speaker for the evening was Prof. Seepe, Special Advisor to the Minister of Human Settlement, who presented a though provoking message on our contribution to education as a nation, compared to other countries and the role of the Council in ensuring an improved education system.

Prof. Seepe aligned his message with the Council's theme for the year, "*Honouring the gift of a democratic order, realised through the strive for equal education and shared efforts to maintain labour peace*", and concentrated on the history of South Africa over the past 20 years, which coincides with the Council's celebration of 20 years of existence.

The focal point was on education, not just in South Africa, but also on a global scale. Prof Seepe mapped out our investment as a nation in education from primary to tertiary education and the number of academics produced, such as Phd scholars, compared to other countries. This glaring presentation showed our depiction as a nation on the global map, which is confined to diseases such as tuberculosis, high HIV prevalence and malaria.

The global picture painted by the keynote speaker served as a reminder of the education ideals that former leaders fought for, such as the late Nelson Mandela. He quoted one of the speeches he delivered in 1954: "*During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal, which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.*"

Prof. Seepe appealed to all in attendance to honour the ideals that the late Nelson Mandela fought for. He reiterated that education is the instrument of transformation that we have to use as a country to claim our place on the world stage and change our economic, social and political conditions for the better.



The theme of this year's celebration embraces our

[Prof Seepe, Guest speaker at the AGM Gala Event.](#)

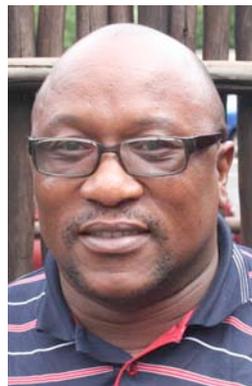
commemorative spirit as an organisation, but also acknowledges our achievements in education over the past 20 years, which was sparked by the desire for equal education.

The message that strongly emerged from all speakers was that there is still significant work that lies ahead, beyond the 20 years of our existence as an organisation. The speakers also made it clear that the task of improving education in South Africa was a collective one that required the commitment of all stakeholders.

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## GAUTENG CHAMBER DEVELOPMENTS

By David Moatshe



Temporary teachers who have worked for the Department of Basic Education for more than three months will be absorbed permanently in the education system.

## **Collective Agreement No. 1 of 2014**

The Gauteng Chamber has adopted Collective Agreement No. 1 of 2014 that will assist temporary educators in the Gauteng Department Basic of Education.

This agreement is specifically dealing with the absorption of temporary educators. These educators to be absorbed must have served the Gauteng Department of Basic Education for at least three (3) months or more as temporary educators.

This landmark agreement will improve the education system and stabilise schooling. The agreement also protects the rights of foreign nationals who are in the education system.

## **Collective Agreement No. 2 of 2005**

The Province will soon review Collective Agreement 2 of 2005. The collective agreement speaks to the recruitment process. The review is on the backdrop of spiralling promotion appointments disputes in the province. The Dispute Prevention Task Team in the province is currently working on a review proposal that will improve the recruitment process.

It is also encouraged that the recruitment process of teachers should be of a high standard. The teaching profession should be able to compete with other corporate professions.

## **Realignment Process**

The Province is on the brink of completing the last phase of the Realignment Process, embarked upon in the 2013/14 financial year. The realignment process brought a restructured organogram of the Education Department in Gauteng. The Chamber was driven by a desire to emerge with an efficient and effective organogram responsive to the needs of our curriculum. The last phase of the process saw the advertisements of critical vacancies in the realisation of public quality education. Parties realised that for schools to deliver on the public mandate, educators require well-resourced districts.

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## **TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION CAN ASSIST EDUCATORS**

**By Moses Pharasi**



Professional development in the Northern Cape Chamber is defined as learning that increases / improves educator knowledge and /or skills. It also enables them to increase achievements of all learners while eliminating achievement gaps.

The school environment in which some educators work in is not conducive for teaching and learning. They need support both in and out of the classroom. School visits should also provide information around learner performance and progress towards achieving set goals.

This can be achieved in partnership with School Management Teams (SMTs) and Labour Unions. From this point on, educators engage in professional development activities offered within or outside (Labour unions) of the Department of Basic Education with the supervisor's awareness and support. Planning for, engaging in, and keeping the records of professional development activities and Professional Development Plans (PDPs) are the responsibility of educators.

Other methods to be considered are Induction and Mentoring of new educators. This programme matches the experienced educator (mentor) with an incoming educator, and both of them engage in various forms of professional development. This fosters growth in their own practice and in the education of their learners. Their learning is supported by building strong principals, School Management Team or department colleagues (subject advisors) and curriculum coordinators.

The Induction and Mentoring program strives to create an environment where collegial and reflective practice is the norm and where learners, educators and administrators build a community of reflective and self-directed learners. It is to build on the premise that incoming educators as adults know themselves as learners, have a natural,

inherent potential to learn, and will be motivated to work collaboratively with their mentors to create the kinds of learning that will improve their practice and improve learning. Thus, support is individualised, based on the needs of the incoming educators and their learners.

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## HUGE TEACHING BOOST FOR CAPE

By Michelle Jones



In “thrilling” news for teachers, class sizes will be smaller than they have been in a decade, with an additional 676 teaching posts in Western Cape schools next year.

Western Cape Education MEC Debbie Schäfer announced the basket of posts for 2015 on 20 July 2014.

Teachers’ unions have welcomed the increased number of posts, but the South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu) said thousands of additional posts were necessary to make a real dent in class sizes.

The increase would bring the total number of teaching posts to 32 033.

Posts would be allocated to schools at an upcoming meeting with unions and Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Head, Penny Vinjevold.

Schäfer said the increased basket had been determined after much consultation, calculation and forecasting.

“I am delighted to announce that we will be able to increase in a sustainable manner the number of new educator posts to 32 033 in 2015 – a further increase of 676 posts as compared to the adjusted allocation this year.

“The projected teacher to learner ratio is expected to be 34:1 based on projected learner numbers for 2015. This is the lowest it has been in the past 10 years which is an exceptional achievement given the financial climate and the level of inward migration.”

The department usually worked to norms of 35:1 in primary schools and 36:1 in high schools.

Former Education MEC Donald Grant had announced a few months ago that the number of teaching posts would increase by 226 posts during the course of the year.

“Therefore, at the start of the 2015 school year, there will be 902 more educators than in January 2014,” Schäfer said.

“The WCED, in consultation with educator unions and school governing body associations, will now determine where each of the additional posts will be allocated.

“I look forward to a favourable outcome, also taking into account our three strategic goals of improved language and mathematics results at schools, the improvement in the number and quality of passes in the national senior certificate and the reduction in the number of underperforming schools.”

She said these factors had been taken into account to determine the posts:

- \* The WCED budget.
- \* The increase in pupil numbers.
- \* Projected growth in pupil numbers.
- \* Curriculum needs of schools.
- \* Protection of non-negotiable priorities including infrastructure and maintenance.
- \* Cost of living and inflation.
- \* Pro-poor relief measures.

National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa provincial chairman David Millar said: “It’s thrilling news for schools. The more posts you have in the system, the better the system.”

He said posts would be allocated by prioritising the foundation phase and poorer schools.

Jonavon Rustin, Sadtu provincial secretary, said: "We welcome the creation of 676 new posts. But because we have such a backlog of posts this does not make a dent in reducing class sizes which would improve the quality of education."

He said 2 000 to 3 000 new posts should be added each year to make a real impact on class sizes. This would ensure no class had more than 28 pupils, he said.

Schäfer said the additional posts were "a testimony to how good management and planning can be applied to ensure we achieve our objective of providing quality education".

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